

REMARKS

Prior to the present Amendment, claims 1, 2, 5-33, and 36-59 were all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 7-12, 15-18, 21-33, 38-43, 46-49, and 52-59 remain rejected on the previous grounds of record. Claims 5, 6, 13, 14, 19, 20, 36, 37, 44, 45, 50, and 51 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this Amendment, Applicant has canceled claims 5, 6, 13, 14, 19, 20, 36, 37, 44, 45, 50, and 51 without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, upon entry of the present Amendment, claims 1, 2, 7-12, 15-18, 21-33, 38-43, 46-49, and 52-59 will be all the claims pending in the application.

I. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 7-12, 15-18, 21-33, 38-43, 46-49, and 52-59 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,697,352 to Ludwig et al. (“Ludwig”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,618,383 to Tomlins (“Tomlins”), in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,154,780 to Zhu (“Zhu”).

The Examiner has indicated that claims 5, 6, 36, and 37 contain allowable subject matter. Applicant has incorporated the subject matter of allowable claims 5, 6, 36, and 37 into independent claims 1, 2, 32, and 33, respectively. Applicant has made a similar amendment to independent claims 29 and 30. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 2, 29, 30, 32, and 33 are now allowable. Since claims 7-12, 15-18, and 21-28 are dependent on claims 1 and 2, claim 31 is dependent upon claim 30, and claims 38-43, 46-49, and 52-59 are dependent upon claims 32 and 33, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their respective dependencies.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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